

Chapter 3

Management Plan

The Fish Creek subunit is to be developed as a major, commercial agricultural project and the Moraine Ridge subunit as a settlement area, with a mix of year-round residences and recreational cabins and a commercial center at the southern end of the Ridge. Provision has been made for transportation corridors through and within the unit. Important public recreation, fish and wildlife, and water quality values will be protected by retention in public ownership of an inter-connecting system of wetlands and stream corridors. A 400 foot-wide corridor for the Iditarod trail will also be retained in public ownership as will key access points to Fish Creek and the lakes in the unit. The selected Master Plan for the study area is depicted on page 47.

It is likely that the Fish Creek study area will eventually be traversed by a major north-south road connecting the Point Mackenzie area with the Parks Highway near Willow and a major east-west road connecting the Beluga area with the railbelt. The Master Plan shows the preferred alignment for these corridors. These locations were selected over other alternatives because they allow the optimum farm tract layout. The corridors were located by Department of Transportation utilizing available information, primarily a soil survey by the Soil Conservation Service. A preliminary engineering study which will provide more detailed information is necessary before the location of those corridors can be considered final. Some minor adjustments in the farm tract layout may be necessary if the preliminary engineering study determines that the corridors need to be relocated.

In addition, if the preliminary engineering study indicates that the north-south road, as shown on the Master Plan, will be substantially more expensive to build than the estimates in this plan, then the cost of building a road in the alternate north-south corridor shown in the Appendix should also be determined. If it is determined that it would cost substantially less to build the main north-south road in the alternate corridor, DNR, DOTPF, and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough should reevaluate the two alternatives. A substantial change in the Master Plan (e.g. moving the main north-south road west into the alternate corridor) would require an amendment of this plan. This issue is discussed further under Transportation in this chapter.

Specific management decisions are described in the following pages; they are organized by the resource they most affect.